

SRI KRISHNA-PRIYA SRI SHYAMANANDA PRABHU



SRI KRISHNA GOPALANANDA DEVA GOSWAMI PRABHUPADA

	Sri-Sri-Gauranga-vidhur jayati	
	Sri-Sri-Radha-Shyamasundara-devo vijayatetamam	
	Sri-Sri-Shyamananda-prabhuh sharanam	
	Sri-Sri-Rasikananda-prabhuh sharanam	
	Sri-Baladeva-Vidyabhushanah sahayam	

SRI KRISHNA-PRIYA SRI SHYAMANANDA PRABHU

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Author:

Descendant of Sri Rasikananda Prabhu
Sri Gaudiya Vaishnava Sampradayacharya
Sri Krishna Gopalananda Deva Goswami Prabhupada

Translated by Dr. Demian Martins

Sri Sri Radha-Shyamsundar Temple

Jagadguru Sri Shyamananda Prabhu Dwar Peeth

One of the prominent Dwar Peeth among the fifty two Dwar Peeth of the Four Vaishnava Sampradayas in the whole world, and the main one among the only two Dwar Peeths of the Madhva Gaudeshvara Sampradaya

Mobile: 94122 26368 ; 92580 56368 ; WhatsApp: 94122 80938

e-mail: shyamanandaprabhu@radhashyamsundar.com

shyamanandaprabhu1535@gmail.com

website: www.radhashyamsundar.com

Sevakunj, Sridham Vrindavan-281121, Mathura, U.P., India

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Mathura, U.P., India –**Mobile: 94122 26368 ; 92580 56368**

This booklet is available at:

1. Sri Sri Radha-Shyamsundar Temple
Sevakunj, Sridham Vrindavan-281121, Mathura
U.P., India - Mobile: 94122 26368 ; 92580 56368
2. Sri Sri Radha-Govind Temple, Sri Shyamananda Gaddi
Gopiballabhpur, Medinipur Dist., West Bengal
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7. Sri Sri Kunj Math, Sri Mahaprabhu's first residence in Puri
Ganamalla Sahi, Vali Sahi, Puri, Odisha, India, Mobile: 07504699049
8. Sri Sri Baladeva Vidyabhushana Prabhupada's Birthplace
Athantar, Remuna, Balasore, Odisha, India
9. Sri Sri Shyamananda Niketan
Gaura Vihar, Patia, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India
Pin-751030 Ph. (0674) 2600665
10. Sri Sri Shyamananda Ashram
Radha Nagari, Chandaneshvar, Balasore
Odisha, India

Preface

By doing a critical study of the biography of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu and remembering his divine pastimes, the mind, intelligence and senses become astonished.

By giving to Sri Shyamananda Prabhu Her golden anklet, the “Nupur Tilak” in the shape of Her lotus foot, the beautiful Deity of Sri Shyamsundar bent in three ways, etc., Srimati Radharani, the daughter of King Vrishabhanu, showered the nectar of Her divine mercy on him. We don’t find any other example of such mercy in the Vaishnava world. Even Sri Jiva Goswami, the best of sober scholars, started dancing like a child in divine joy after hearing about Srimati Radharani’s exceptional mercy.

In those days, acharyas from all sampradayas would regularly come to the grove of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu in Sri Vrindavan to have darshan of the Deities served by him: Sri Shyamsundar, the personified Mahabhava from Srimati Radharani’s heart, and the self-manifested Srimati Radharani. Especially Srila Jiva Goswami, Srila Gopala Bhatta Goswami, Srila Lokanatha Goswami, Srila Bhugarbha Goswami, etc. would regularly go there, and Srila Raghunatha Dasa Goswami, Srila Krishna Dasa Kaviraja Goswami, etc. would also often come from Radha Kunda to have darshan.

In Sri Nityananda Dasa’s book entitled “Prema Vilasa,” Sri Shyamananda Prabhu is described as an avatar invested with the energy and devotional emotions of Sri Advaitacharya. In connection with Yogi Damodara’s episode as well as the description of how Sri Rasikananda Prabhu met his Gurudeva, in Sri Gopijanavallabha Dasa’s book entitled “Sri Rasika Mangala,” Sri Shyamananda Prabhu is described as an eternal beloved (manjari) of Lord Sri Krishna. In Sri Krishnacharana Dasa’s book named “Sri Shyamananda Prakasha,” Sri Shyamananda Prabhu is described as Lord Jagannatha’s body and Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu’s soul.

In Sri Vrindavan, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu remained completely immersed in the ocean of loving devotional service to Sri Sri Radha-Shyamsundar. Lord Sri Krishna Himself ordered him thrice to go to Utkal (Odisha), which was burning in the illusory energy, to propagate loving devotional service. By his mercy, there in Odisha, the king of yogis Sri Damodara Mishra then became the king of devotees. Uddanda Bhuinya, a cruel landlord from Baliya near Nrisinghpur, had indulged in the cold-blooded murder of countless Vaishnavas and kept 718 rags, the only possessions of his victims, in one room of his palace as articles of exhibition. Such a devil-like man also became a Vaishnava by the great mercy of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu.

On the way to Sri Vrindavan via Jharikhand, he granted the rarely attained love for Lord Krishna even to animals, birds and immovable beings in the forest. From tigers up to crocodiles, all became entitled to obtain the rarely attained love for Sri Krishna by receiving Sri Hari Nama from Sri Shyamananda Prabhu. Even among those Muslims who had destroyed countless temples and deities because of their blind hate for Hindus, there were many who felt attracted by Sri Shyamananda Prabhu’s devotion and uncommon divine personality and ultimately sought refuge at his lotus feet.

Not to speak of human beings, animals and birds, even demigods and supernatural beings living in this mortal world also took refuge at his lotus feet and thus made their lives prosperous. Rankini Devi (presiding deity of Dhalbhumgarh), Vasuli Devi of Bhograi, Sarvamangala Devi of Keshiyadi, etc., who used to eat the flesh of both humans and animals, also gave up their cruelty and became great Vaishnavis after taking refuge at his lotus feet.

It was at the call of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu that the Acintya-bheda-abheda-tattva Gaudiya Vedanta Acharya, Sri Baladeva Vidyabhushana Prabhupada, the crest jewel among Shyamanandi Vaishnavas, appeared in Athantara village in Remuna, Balasore District, Odisha.

It is a very difficult and ambitious task for an ignorant, arrogant, extremely faithless and wicked person like me, overwhelmed by the Kali Yuga, to narrate the divine pastimes of Sri Shyamananda

Prabhu, who is a combined incarnation of Sri Advaitacharya and Sri Mahavishnu, as well as Lord Sri Krishna's eternal beloved (manjari). Nevertheless, taking shelter at the lotus feet of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu and considering a drop of mercy from the staunch Vaishnavas from all over the world as my only possession, I am having the impudence to start narrating his divine pastimes.

If the supremely merciful Vaishnavas enjoy this book and thus take even a drop of the sweet nectar of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu's pastimes within their hearts, then I will consider my effort a success.

Several contradictions are found in the narrations of the pastimes of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu in different books by different authors. I spared no effort to reconcile them in my book and present the authentic versions. The composition of this text was based on the following books:

Name of Book	Name of author
1. Sri Shyamananda-shatakam	Sri Aniruddhavatar Sri Rasikananda Prabhu
2. Sri Shyamananda-rasa-nidhi	-do-
3. Sri Bindu-prakasha	Sri Acharya Murari
4. Sri Shyamananda-rasarnava	Sri Krishnacharana Dasa
5. Sri Shyamananda-prakasha	-do-
6. Sri Bhakti-ratnakara	Sri Narahari Chakravarti
7. Sri Narottama-vilasa	-do-
8. Sri Sri Rasika-mangala	Srimad Gopijanavallabha Dasa
9. Sri Prema-vilasa	Sri Nityananda Dasa
10. Sri Abhirama-lilamrita	Sri Abhirama Dasa
11. Kanaka Manjari Sri Shyamananda	Sri Brajendra Nandananda Deva Goswami
12. Sri Shyamananda Charitra Sudha	Sri Subala Chandra Goswami
13. Sri Shyamananda Charitamrita	Sri Kanhailal Adhikari
O Bhajan Paddhati (Oriya)	
14. Prabhu Sri Shyamananda (Oriya)	Sri Parvati Charana Dasa
15. Sri Shyamananda Lilamrita	
O Bhajan Paddhati (Oriya)	Sri Narasimhananda
16. Sri Guru Kripa Dan	Sri Ramadas Babaji Maharaj
17. Sri Hari-bhakti-vilasa	Srila Gopala Bhatta Goswami

May Sri Sri Radha-Shyamsundar give the right of rendering service in Their sweet pastimes in the groves to those who have helped in any capacity to make this publication possible. This is my earnest request at Their lotus feet.

The unworthy author

DEDICATION

sandrananda-karam rasonnati-karam sri-krsna-bhava-karam
cetah-santi-karam tamah-ksaya-karam bhaktavali-sankaram
dukhoccheda-karam sukhanyaya-karam karunya-sampat-karam
dinoddhara-karam namami rasikanandam prabhum bhaskaram

(Sri Rasika Mangala, verse 3)

I offer this flower-like book entitled “Sri Krishna-priya Sri Shyamananda Prabhu” as an oblation of devotion at the lotus hands of Sri Rasikananda Prabhu, who is another form of Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, an avatar of Aniruddha from Sri Krishna’s quadruple expansions, and an incarnation invested with the mood of Sri Srinivasa Pandita. Being always absorbed in an ocean of love for Sri Sri Radha Krishna from childhood, for the souls in this mortal world he was like a sun shining the taste of such love, and among the star-like Shyamanandi Vaishnavas, he was like the moon.

- Sri Krishna Gopalananda Deva Goswami Prabhupada

	Sri-Sri-Radha-Shyamasundara-devo vijayatetamam	
	Sri-Sri-Shyamananda-prabhuh sharanam	
	Sri-Sri-Rasikananda-prabhuh sahayam	

A Short Biography of **Sri Shyamananda Prabhu**

In the sixteenth century AD, a very rich man named Sri Krishna Deva lived in the village Dharendra Bahadurpur in Gauda Mandala. He was very serene, gentle, handsome, devoted to the brahmanas, and above all, a great devotee of Lord Sri Krishna. His wife, Durika Devi, was a faithful follower of her husband in every respect, and like him was also a devotee of Lord Krishna. Such a beautiful union is very rarely seen. Despite being very prosperous in all respects, Sri Krishna Deva was very sad because every child he had died immediately after birth. After the demise of many children, a son with all the characteristics of a great personality was born in the house of Sri Krishna Deva on Madhu Purnima of Chaitra month in 1535 AD. Apprehensive that he might also attract the attention of Yamaraja and bad stars if they give him a beautiful name, the villagers gave that cute boy an ordinary name: Duhkhi (sad).

Duhkhi started growing slowly like the phases of the moon. From his very childhood, he was very vigilant to associate only with saintly people and avoid the wicked. Due to his serene and gentle nature, modest behavior, simplicity, character and devotion, not only his parents loved him, but so did all the neighbors. His “anna-prashana,” “chuda-karana” and other samskaras were performed with great celebrations. Due to his wonderful intellect and extraordinary talent, he finished his study of grammar, etc. in a very short time before going on to study rhetoric, etc.

From childhood, a ray of devotion for Lord Sri Krishna was clearly visible in his heart. The attractive forms of worldly sense objects held no allure for his mind. He totally immersed himself in the waves of love for Lord Sri Krishna, which attracts the minds and souls of devotees. Being a knower of the scriptures, he understood that it was very essential to take refuge at the lotus feet of a true guru to cross the ocean of material existence and attain the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord. He had heard from the Vaishnavas about the extraordinary devotion of Sri Hridaya Chaitanya Adhikari Thakura, a dear disciple of Sri Gauri Dasa Pandita Thakura, who was very dear to Sri Sri Gaura and Nityananda. Within his mind, Duhkhi chose him as guru. His father, Sri Krishna Deva, felt extremely happy about his son’s selection of a guru. However, when Duhkhi was ready to go to Ambika with the intention of surrendering to the feet of his guru, following a long and dangerous road on foot, his father became overwhelmed by paternal affection and started adopting several deceptive means to delay the impending separation. When Duhkhi realized that his affectionate father would go on creating hindrances to delay his departure to Ambika, he left his heaven-like home on a foggy night in the month of Phalguna. Overwhelmed by his powerful desire to serve the Lord, his home seemed as if worthless to him. Crossing a very long and arduous path alone, he finally reached Ambika.

A virtuous man is able to easily recognize other virtuous man. An expert jeweler is able to identify a diamond among many pieces of glass. Similarly, as soon as he saw the young Duhkhi, Sri Hridaya Chaitanya understood that the newcomer was qualified to worship Lord Sri Krishna. In a very short time, Duhkhi won his Guru’s heart by his devotion and dedicated service. On Phalghuni Purnima of 1553 AD, his affectionate Gurudeva initiated him in Sri Hari Nama and then in the Sri Krishna Mantra. He gave him the name “Duhkhi Krishna Das” and engaged him in the service of Sri Sri Gaura and Nityananda.

Despite serving the lotus feet of his Guru, performing worship with devotion, regularly chanting Sri Hari Nama on beads, singing and listening to the pastimes of Lord Sri Krishna, etc., Duhkhi Krishna

Dasa was not feeling satisfied. He felt that something was still missing. Consequently, with the permission of his Gurudeva, he left on a pilgrimage to all the holy places of India to pacify his restless mind. After spending about eight years taking darshan of all the holy places, he returned to his ancestral village, Dharendra, in 1562 AD. On seeing Duhkhi Krishna Dasa after such a long time, his parents and relatives felt extremely happy. In order to bind his son to the home, his father arranged for his marriage to Srimati Gauranga Dasi, even though it went against his wish, for he was so absorbed in love for Krishna.

Those who have tasted the sweetness of nectar even once do not feel satisfied with ordinary worldly sweets. During his pilgrimage, Duhkhi Krishna Dasa had been to the enchanting twelve forests and gardens of the holy land of Vraja Mandala, which had once been touched by the lotus feet of Sri Sri Radha-Krishna. Memories of the Dham were always attracting him. Due to this intense attraction, he took the permission of his parents and in 1566 AD again left his village to go to Vraja. First he spent some days in Ambika, where Sri Hridaya Chaitanya was astonished to see how he had advanced in exclusive devotion by following his directives.

His Gurudeva ordered him to regularly water the flower garden of Sri Sri Gaura and Nityananda, which he gladly did. Following this order with mind and body, everyday he used to fill a pitcher with water from the Ganges, place it on his head, carry it to the garden, water it and then start over again. The mere thought that he was watering the garden of Sri Sri Nitai and Gauranga would make his eyes fill with tears of love. He was not even aware of how many pitchers of water he had brought. Gradually, due to the friction of the pitcher, wounds appeared on his head, which soon became infected and infested with worms. Yet he was so absorbed in his service that this did not make any difference for him. One day, when he reached the garden with a pitcher full of water on his head, his Gurudeva was present there. As soon as he placed the pitcher on the ground, a worm fell from his head right before his Gurudeva. On seeing it, Sri Hridaya Chaitanya was disturbed, especially when he noticed that Duhkhi Krishna Dasa's head was full of wounds infected by worms. He understood that this had happened only because he had been obeying his order, and doing so despite of much hardship, without telling anyone of his difficulties. Sri Gurudeva's heart then melted with paternal affection for his disciple. He embraced him and made him sit by his side. He placed his hand endowed with mystic power on his disciple's head and made both the wounds and the worms immediately disappear. After this, Sri Hridaya Chaitanya Thakura felt that Duhkhi Krishna Dasa was qualified to worship of Sri Sri Radha-Krishna and therefore should be sent to the land of Their pastimes, Sri Vraja Mandala. Arriving at this conclusion, he advised Duhkhi Krishna Dasa: "My dear child, go quickly to Vrindavan. There all your desires will be fulfilled by Srila Jiva Goswami."

Following the above instruction of his Gurudeva, Duhkhi Krishna Dasa arrived in his long cherished Sri Vraja Mandala in 1566 AD. His heart became full of bliss and love on touching and seeing the land where Sri Sri Radha-Krishna had performed Their pastimes. Wetting his clothes with tears of love, he offered obeisances to Sri Vraja Mandala again and again. He felt as if that land was echoing with the names "Radhe Radhe" and "Shyam Shyam" everywhere. The parrots, starlings and honey intoxicated bees were filling the sky with sounds as if they were singing the qualities of Sri Sri Radha-Krishna. A fresh breeze was spreading the fragrance of the divine bodies of Sri Sri Radha-Krishna on all directions. Trees like Ashoka, Bakula, Champaka, pomegranate, etc. were standing in rows decorated with their flowers and desiring to serve Sri Sri Radha-Shyamsundar. Longing to have the touch of the soft hands of Sri Sri Radha-Krishna, tall creepers gave up their upwards path and bent down.

Thrilled with joy and full of love, Duhkhi Krishna Dasa started having darshan of the twelve forests and gardens of Vraja Mandala. After that, he had darshan of the house of Sri Nanda Maharaja in Nandagram, the house of Sri Vrishabhanu Maharaja in Barsana, and Giriraja Govardhana and its many caves where Sri Sri Radha-Krishna had performed Their pastimes.

From there he visited Yavat village and then went to Sri Radha Kunda, which is very dear to Lord Krishna, where he had darshan of Srila Raghunatha Dasa Goswami, the best of renunciants, and Srila Krishna Dasa Kaviraja Goswami, humility personified.

Srila Raghunatha Dasa Goswami sent him to meet Srila Jiva Goswami accompanied by a resident of Vrindavan named “Dasa.” In Vrindavan, which is surrounded by the River Yamuna, daughter of Kalinda, Duhkhi Krishna Dasa fulfilled his strong desire to have darshan of Sri Govinda Deva, Sri Madana Mohana and Sri Gopinatha. As soon as he appeared before Srila Jiva Goswami and fell prostrated at his feet like a rod, Srila Jiva Goswami felt a thrill of joy all over his body and immediately realized that his long wait for such a person had come to an end. He also felt that in a short time the stream of the nectarean supreme love displayed by the gopis of Vraja in their spontaneous (*raganuga*) mode of worship as propagated by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu would flow everywhere. Sri Srinivasa Acharya, an avatar invested with the energy and loving emotions of Sriman Mahaprabhu, and Sri Narottama Dasa Thakura, an avatar invested with the energy and loving emotions of Sri Nityananda Prabhu, had already reached Sri Vrindavan. Now Duhkhi Krishna Dasa, an avatar invested with the energy and loving emotions of Sri Advaitacharya, had also reached there to join them. Following Srila Jiva Goswami, these three great personalities gathered to study the devotional books written by the Gaudiya Vaishnava Goswamis.

Sri Gauri Dasa Pandita was a devotee worshipping in the mood of friendship (*sakhya-rasa*). Since Duhkhi Krishna Dasa was a disciple of Sri Gauri Dasa Pandita’s disciple, Sri Hridaya Chaitanya Adhikari, he was also worshipping in the mood of friendship. However, while studying the treatises on Bhakti under the guidance of Srila Jiva Goswami, he clearly felt that among neutrality (*shanta*), servitude (*dasya*), friendship (*sakhya*), paternal love (*vatsalya*) and conjugal love (*madhura*), the last one is the best. In view of this, he became particularly eager to serve Sri Sri Radha-Shyamsundar in Their sweet pastimes in the groves. He expressed this strong desire to Srila Jiva Goswami, who then concluded that Duhkhi Krishna Dasa was quite qualified to perform the spontaneous (*raganuga*) mode of worship, and therefore there was no hindrance to enlighten him about the secret principles of *madhura-bhava*. Following the instructions of Sri Hridaya Chaitanya, Srila Jiva Goswami started to instruct Duhkhi Krishna Dasa on those secret topics. In this way, under the guidance of Srila Jiva Goswami, Duhkhi Krishna Dasa obtained the right to perform devotional service mentally as approved by Srila Rupa Goswami. Due to Duhkhi Krishna Dasa’s determined insistence, Srila Jiva Goswami also gave him the rarely attained right to clean the groves. From then on, Duhkhi Krishna Dasa started spending most of his time in the service and worship of Sri Sri Radha-Krishna inside his underground bhajan kutir (cave), meditating on Them with a fixed mind, doing Sri Hari Nama kirtana, chanting mantras on his beads, etc. And every day before sunrise he used to joyfully go to the groves with a broom and a scraper to clean the groves.

In this way, Duhkhi Krishna Dasa spent twelve years engaging in very hard spiritual practices until his eternal original identity was revealed. Once at night while sitting in his bhajan kutir, Duhkhi Krishna Dasa, was deeply absorbed in remembering the sweetest pastimes of Sri Sri Radha-Krishna during the eight periods of the day. All of a sudden, he became engrossed in a very enchanting pastime. He saw that the enjoyer of rasa, Sri Shyamsundar, was absorbed in dancing and singing with the doe-eyed damsels of Vraja. Some Sakhis were dancing, while some were singing with a melodious voice. At that time, at the hint given by the glances of the Sakhis, Srimati Radharani also started a very attractive and alluring dance to give even more joy to Sri Shyamsundar. Seeing that unique dance, capable of causing jealousy even in the minds of Gandharvas, Sri Shyamsundar and the Sakhis became immersed in an ocean of joy. During that fast-paced dance, a golden anklet named “Manjughosha,” which was studded with sapphires, all of a sudden slipped from the left foot of Srimati Radharani and fell on the dancing arena, but nobody noticed this.

After enjoying the dance, Sri Sri Kishori and Kishora (Radha-Krishna) sported on a diamond studded bed until They fell asleep. Upon looking through the window and seeing the sweet couple united, the Sakhis became immersed in an ocean of bliss. Early in the morning, when a female monkey named Kakkhati uttered some scary words, Sri Sri Radha-Krishna woke up and left for their respective homes in a hurry followed by the Sakhis, even though They did not want to go away. At that time, with a mind

determined to do a superhuman effort, Duhkhi Krishna Dasa also stood up and went to clean the groves as usual, carrying a broom and a scraper and singing a morning bhajan. On reaching the place of the Rasa dance, Duhkhi Krishna Dasa directly experienced that compared with the other days, there were more signs of loving pastimes. Jasmine creepers, etc. were lying scattered here and there, but despite that, all the trees and creepers were full of fresh, fragrant flowers. Inside the groves, the divine footprints of Sri Sri Radha-Krishna and the Sakhis could be seen here and there. Parrots, cuckoos and black bees were singing morning songs in praise of Sri Sri Radha-Krishna with more enthusiasm than usual. Surcharged with divine love, Duhkhi Krishna Dasa started rolling on that sacred ground. When he started cleaning the arena of the Rasa dance within the groves while singing a morning song about Sri Sri Radha-Krishna, he suddenly saw a glittering object under a pomegranate tree and with great curiosity ran towards it. By the influence of Yoga Maya, he had forgotten the pastimes of the previous night. Reaching the place under the pomegranate tree, he became wonder-struck to see a divine golden anklet studded with sapphires, which was lighting up the groves with its radiance. With great surprise he looked in all directions with inquisitive eyes and suddenly heard a voice from the sky: "Keep this anklet very carefully."

Duhkhi Krishna Dasa thought that this must be some transcendental pastime of the transcendental Sri Vrindavan, a mystery which would be solved at the proper time. As soon as he thought "This anklet is certainly supernatural," and touched it to his forehead, a thrill of transcendental joy ran throughout his body. The eight bodily transformations due to emotion (*ashta-sattvika-bhava*) such as perspiration, trembling, tears, standing of the hairs on end, etc. appeared in his body, and being surcharged with loving emotions, he started dancing. Loudly chanting "Radhe Radhe," he lost his steadiness. However, after remembering his regular service in the place of the Rasa dance, with great effort he somehow composed himself. "There must certainly be some secret in connection with this anklet," thinking in this way, he carefully kept the anklet and the scraper under his shawl and hid it in the middle of the creepers inside the grove.

After that, Duhkhi Krishna Dasa became absorbed in sweeping the groves with great zeal. After some time, an old woman wearing torn clothes appeared before him. Upon being questioned by Duhkhi Krishna Dasa, she told him that her name was Radha Dasi, a Kanya-kubja brahmana by caste and a resident of the village Yavat in the Mathura district. She further said that in the previous evening, after fetching water from the Yamuna, her daughter-in-law had come to that place to pluck flowers, but after suddenly seeing a lion (Sri Shyamsundar) nearby, she had become frightened and quickly run away. She had been in such a hurry that she had not noticed that the golden anklet adorning her left foot had slipped and fallen somewhere in that grove. Radha Dasi continued informing that she had come to that place to search for that lost golden anklet and requested Duhkhi Krishna Dasa to quickly return it to her if he found it. Duhkhi Krishna Dasa admitted that the anklet had been found by him but humbly told her that such an item could not belong to any inhabitant of this mortal world because with a simple touch of it, he felt surcharged with divine love for Srimati Radharani. Hence it was clear that there must be some mystery related to it. He added that since she seemed to be a normal resident of this mortal world, her daughter-in-law must also certainly be so. Moreover, from her torn clothes it was evident that she was a poor lady and that her daughter-in-law could not possibly adorn herself with a golden anklet encrusted with sapphires. Yet he concluded by stating that in any case, if her daughter-in-law came personally and showed him that on her other foot she wore a similar anklet, then on the presence of five to ten witnesses from their village, he would hand over the precious anklet he had found.

Hearing these words of Duhkhi Krishna Dasa, the old lady felt a bit perplexed. Factually that old lady in torn clothes was not an ordinary poor woman but Sri Lalita Sakhi, the dear friend of Srimati Radharani. She understood that it would not be possible to win over him with her cleverness. Duhkhi Krishna Dasa was fully convinced that the anklet was supernatural and that the old lady's daughter-in-law was a common mortal. Seeing that Sri Lalita Sakhi was in a predicament, Srimati Radharani, who was

standing behind the creepers with Sri Vishakha Devi, Sri Vrinda Devi and other Sakhis, appeared before Duhkhi Krishna Dasa and took on the role of mediator.

Unable to persuade him, Sri Lalita Sakhi at last told him the truth. She frankly admitted that his guess that the divine anklet could not belong to any mortal lady was true, for indeed it belonged to Srimati Radharani, daughter of King Vrishabhanu and beloved of Sri Krishna, son of the King of Gokula, Sri Nanda. Upon hearing that, Duhkhi Krishna Dasa was wonder-struck and inquired how the anklet had slipped from Her foot and fallen in the grove. Being very compassionate, Sri Lalita Sakhi then narrated the whole pastime in detail. She further told him that they all wanted to get the anklet back and reach home before Srimati Radharani's harsh-tongued mother-in-law awakened. She advised Duhkhi Krishna Dasa to ask for a boon in exchange for the anklet. As a boon, he expressed his desire to have darshan of Sri Lalita's real form. She fulfilled his desire by granting him divine vision with which he could then behold her original, transcendental form. After that, Duhkhi Krishna Dasa requested the right to engage in the eternal service of Sri Sri Radha-Shyamsundar in their pastimes in the groves of the eternal Goloka Vrindavan. Sri Lalita Sakhi told him that he would certainly obtain that right after leaving his mortal body. He then expressed his strong desire to have darshan of Srimati Radharani's lotus feet. Following Her directions, Sri Lalita gave him Srimati Radharani's mantra which consists of fifteen syllables and is full of six divine opulences, and Sri Vrinda Devi then took him to bathe in Radha Kunda. After taking bath in that pond and chanting that powerful mantra, Duhkhi Krishna Dasa suddenly attained the transcendental form of a Manjari with a golden effulgence. Then, in the eternal Sri Vrindavan, that Manjari placed that divine anklet on her head and entered Srimati Radharani's temple inside a grove, closely following behind Sri Lalita Sakhi and Sri Rupa Manjari. Following Srimati Radharani's merciful direction, Sri Lalita Sakhi touched the golden anklet to the forehead of that Manjari and by its mere touch her previous tilak in the form of a temple of Lord Hari (Hari mandir) immediately turned into a tilak that had the shape of Sri Radha's lotus foot. Then Srimati Radharani mixed sandal, camphor and honey with the saffron smeared on Her breasts, rubbed the mixture on a moonstone, and using the extremity of the anklet, with Her own hand She affectionately made a resplendent dot in the middle of the new tilak on the forehead of that doe-eyed Manjari. Seeing that, Sri Lalita Sakhi named that unique tilak with a resplendent dot in the middle made by Srimati Radharani as "Shyam mohana," and because Duhkhi Krishna Dasa had given so much joy to Srimati Shyama (Radharani), therefore from then on his name would be "Shyamananda." When Sri Vishakha Sakhi saw how Duhkhi Krishna Dasa had assumed the form of a Manjari, which was resplendent like gold, she addressed her as "Kanaka Manjari."

Srimati Radharani and Her companions had showered their special mercy on Duhkhi Krishna Dasa (Shyamananda) and then advised him to go back to the mortal world to accomplish the mission assigned to him. However, upon hearing this instruction and apprehending the impending separation from Srimati Radharani, Sri Shyamananda started to wail very pitifully. With tears in his eyes, he humbly requested Her again and again not to send him back to the mortal world and thus deprive him of the service to Her lotus feet. Srimati Radharani also felt deeply afflicted upon seeing Kanaka Manjari (Shyamananda) in such distress, and Her heart melted with pity. To relieve him from that mental agony, from Her lotus heart Srimati Radharani mercifully manifested Sri Shyamsundar, a faultlessly beautiful Deity, Her life and soul and Her Mahabhava personified, and then asked Sri Lalita Sakhi to deliver Him to Shyamananda.

“Dear Shyamananda, as long as you live in the mortal world you should keep yourself engaged in the loving service and worship of this Deity. In this way you will not suffer due to separation from Me. After that you will come back to my eternal service in the eternal abode.”

At that moment, with Her own lotus mouth Srimati Radharani revealed to Sri Shyamananda the fruits of serving and having darshan of this Deity manifested from Her lotus heart:

“1. **Whoever has darshan of this Deity even once with devotion** shall obtain Prema Bhakti and go to the rarely attained divine abode of Sri Krishna and never be born again. Misfortunes, poverty and heinous sins shall not enter his home;

“2. **Whoever has regular darshan of this Deity** shall go to the rarely attained divine abode of Sri Krishna accompanied by ten past and ten future generations. In this world, accompanied by sons, grandsons and other relatives, they shall enjoy life in happiness, wealth and opulence desired even by the demigods. They shall move around fearless like a lion freed from the blazing trap of the threefold miseries caused by one’s mind, by other living entities and by natural forces;

“3. **Whoever regularly cleans the temple of Sri Shyamsundar** shall go to the heavenly planets and after enjoying all pleasures there, they shall attain the abode of Lord Krishna as one of His attendants and obtain the bliss of His service. **If one regularly smears the temple with cow dung after cleansing it**, then the relatives of their mother, father and spouse will never go to hell;

“4. **Any pious person who places a flag on the top of the temple of Sri Shyamsundar and decorates it with banners** shall immediately become free from all sins committed since birth;

“5. **A fortunate great soul who regularly worships this Deity** shall attain the power to deliver the whole world and all his desires will be fulfilled;

“6. **A fortunate person who gives new garments to this Deity** shall reside on the Moon planet and then attain bliss in the abode of Lord Hari. They shall become rich, fortunate, disease free, and attractive. They shall obtain the fruits of having performed the Ashvamedha and the Rajasuya Yajnas and then live eternally in the abode of Lord Hari;

“7. **A rich person who offers precious ornaments studded with pearls and gems to the Deity of Lord Shyamsundar** shall become the emperor of the whole earth, the destroyer of the enemies, free from all sins, dear to the ladies, and supremely fortunate, and after obtaining the fruits of having performed the Ashvamedha and the Rajasuya Yajnas, he will reside eternally in the abode of Lord Krishna. **If being full of devotion, one shall have the fortune of even once having the darshan of Sri Shyamsundar adorned with golden ornaments**, all his relatives going back seven generations will be delivered.

“8. **A pious person who offers the Deity flower ornaments, an umbrella made of flowers, a pavilion made of flowers, a bed made of flowers, etc.** shall obtain the best objects of enjoyment, amusement and pleasure, and at the end shall go to the eternal abode of Lord Shyamsundar.

“9. **A fortunate person who shall offer first class foodstuffs and beverages to the Deity** shall have all their wishes fulfilled. They will become long-lived, rich, powerful, handsome, attractive, and free from worries and diseases. They will obtain the fruits of having performed the Agnishtoma, Atiratra, Ashvamedha and Rajasuya Yajnas, and at the end shall attain the supreme abode of Lord Krishna;

“10. **Whoever circumambulates the temple of Sri Shyamsundar four times with a heart full of devotion** shall obtain the fruits of having circumambulated the whole universe, having visited all holy places, and having bathed in all of them. They shall become free from all sins, attain the fruits of having

performed ten Ashvamedha Yajnas, and at the end shall be carried by a swan to Lord Krishna's own abode. They will never be born again and all their good wishes will be fulfilled;

“11. A fortunate person who has darshan of Sri Shyamsundar during the Arati shall obtain the fruits of all worship, mantras and rituals previously performed, even if these were given up. Millions of sins committed, even the killing of a brahmana or illicit intercourse, shall be destroyed and at the end they shall attain the supreme abode of Lord Krishna;

“12. If a fortunate person constructs, renovates and cleanses the temple of Sri Shyamsundar, then ten thousands of past and future generations in their family shall go to the abode of Lord Krishna. All the sins committed by them shall be burnt into ashes and they shall very soon attain the bliss of serving Lord Krishna.

Sri Lalita Sakhi then said to Sri Shyamananda that except for Sri Jiva Goswami, he should not reveal this very confidential pastime to anyone else and that if he ever faces any adversity, by merely uttering the divine Sri Radha-mantra given to him, he would be able to directly have her darshan. In this way, after giving all their blessings to him, Srimati Radharani and Her Sakhis disappeared from the grove.

By the wish of Srimati Radharani, Sri Shyamananda then resumed his previous form as a male devotee and left the grove. By the touch of the Manjughosha anklet of Srimati Radharani's foot, his iron scraper had become golden and Sri Shyamananda's previous complexion had turned brightly golden complexion. On his forehead was the “Shyam mohana” tilak in the form of Sri Radha's foot, having a resplendent dot in the middle; on his chest was written “Shyamananda.” Under his arm was a golden scraper; and on his head was the divine Deity of Shyamsundar. Shedding tears, his heart overwhelmed with love, he thus arrived at Sri Jiva Goswami's hut.

As soon as Sri Jiva saw him in such transcendental mood, he became astonished and started inquiring again and again about what happened to him. Sri Shyamananda took Sri Jiva Goswami to a lonely place, and with his heart overwhelmed by emotions and in a choked voice, he narrated the whole confidential pastime. Hearing the incident, Sri Jiva Goswami, who was usually very sober, could not check himself. All of a sudden, he became mad with joy and started dancing like a boy, his heart full of transcendental loving emotions. He embraced Sri Shyamananda again and again very tightly and spoke the following words in a faltering voice, “Today I have completely sold myself to you on account of your deep love. Srimati Radharani was so merciful unto you! Just by thinking about it I am feeling a thrill in my body. From now on you will be known among the Vaishnavas by the name given by Sri Lalita, ‘Shyamananda,’ and your new tilak will be known as ‘Shyamanandi Tilak.’ This divine Deity, the life and soul of Srimati Radharani, will be known by the name ‘Shyamsundar,’ and by giving His darshan he will deliver the souls afflicted by the Age of Kali.”

Sri Shyamsundar (Lala), the only Deity within the whole creation that was manifested from the lotus heart of Srimati Radharani, was received by Sri Shyamananda Prabhu on Vasanta Panchami (13th January) in 1578 AD, and was installed by him inside his underground bhajan kutir located in Seva Kunj in Sri Vrindavan Dham. Sri Shyamananda Prabhu then became fully absorbed in the loving service to Sri Shyamsundar. In memory of such divine mercy given by Srimati Radharani, Srila Jiva Goswami established a marble altar on the holy spot where the anklet was found.

When a bud blooms, its sweet fragrance reaches every nook and corner of the garden. It is not possible to confine its fragrance to one place or hide it. In the same way, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu's

‘Nupur Tilak’ with a shining dot in the middle, and the uncommonly beautiful Deity of Shyamsundar soon became known in every house in Vraja Mandala. However at the same time seeds of doubt also started sprouting. Some Vaishnavas from Gauda Mandala had come to Vraja for darshan, and after returning they misinformed Sri Hridaya Chaitanya Thakura that Duhkhi Krishna Dasa had given him up as Guru, given up the name given by him, and had adopted a new name, “Shyamananda” and a new tilak known as “Shyamanandi.” Hearing such a bad news about his very dear disciple, Sri Hridaya Chaitanya Thakura felt deeply hurt. He thought that by deserting his original Gurudeva Duhkhi Krishna Dasa had acted against the scriptures and tainted the dignity of his Vaishnava lineage for which he would have to suffer in hell. Thinking about this, he became disturbed and left Gauda Mandala accompanied by the sixty-four Mahantas, twelve Gopalas and other distinguished Vaishnavas. After reaching the Dhira Samira area of Sri Vrindavan, he called for a large meeting of Vaishnavas at Kalpa Kunja to decide which action should be taken against Duhkhi Krishna Dasa.

At the beginning of the meeting, Sri Hridaya Chaitanya asked Duhkhi Krishna Dasa to explain on whose direction he had given up his original Guru and adopted a new name and tilak. In reply, with all humility and with folded hands, Duhkhi Krishna Dasa stated that it was only by his Gurudeva’s mercy that he received the name “Shyamananda” and a new tilak. Hearing this Sri Hridaya Chaitanya was very displeased and angry and openly declared that to the best of his knowledge he had no idea what Duhkhi Krishna Dasa was talking about. In the presence of all assembled Vaishnavas he said that if after washing off the tilak and name, they once again appeared on his body in the presence of all, then he would accept that these were indeed obtained by his mercy—otherwise Duhkhi Krishna Dasa would be excommunicated from the Vaishnava community for misbehaving and speaking lies. Then Srila Hridaya Chaitanya washed the new tilak adorning the forehead of Duhkhi Krishna Dasa and the name “Shyamananda” written on his chest, rubbing them off with his hand.

Sri Shyamananda Prabhu requested the Vaishnavas to give him 48 minutes and started chanting the Sri Radha-mantra. As soon as he chanted the mantra, he assumed his Manjari form, and accompanied by Sri Lalita Sakhi reached Srimati Radharani’s lotus feet in the eternal abode and informed Her about the incident. Under the direction of Srimati Radharani, her cousin brother Subala, who also happened to be a close friend of Sri Krishna, assured Sri Shyamananda of protection. Back in the assembly at Dhira Samira in Sri Vrindavan, by the unlimited mercy of Srimati Radharani, and in the presence of all Vaishnavas, the name “Shyamananda” on his chest and the tilak on his forehead reappeared, even brighter than before. Seeing this miracle, the sixty-four Mahantas, twelve Gopalas and all other Vaishnavas present filled the sky exclaiming, “Jaya Radhe!” Being definitely proved before everyone’s eyes that Sri Shyamananda received such mercy directly from Srimati Radharani, all the present Vaishnavas started praising him.

After this incident Sri Hridaya Chaitanya went to circumambulate Sri Vraja Mandala accompanied by all the Vaishnavas who came from Gauda Mandala with him, and Sri Shyamananda Prabhu followed them. After having darshan of the twelve forests they reached Sanketa Kunja, where the sweet Rasa Lila of Sri Sri Radha-Krishna was being performed. Seeing that uncommon presentation of the dance of Sri Sri Radha-Krishna, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu became surcharged with the mood of the gopis and started dancing sweetly like a gopi, touching the end of his cloth on his forehead and shaking his waist. Seeing his dance, Sri Hridaya Chaitanya thought that Sri Shyamananda Prabhu had abandoned the worship of Lord Sri Krishna in the mood of friendship and adopted Srimati Radharani’s mood of a girlfriend (sakhi-bhava). Being a worshipper in the mood of friendship, Sri Hridaya Chaitanya became

angry and repeatedly ordered Sri Shyamananda Prabhu to stop dancing, but when he refused to give up the gopi mood, his Gurudeva hit his back with a stick three times.

That night Sri Hridaya Chaitanya saw Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in a dream. He saw that the bright white outer garment of Sriman Mahaprabhu was stained with blood in several spots. Sri Hridaya Chaitanya enquired about the cause of the stains and Sriman Mahaprabhu told him that He took upon His soft body all the wounds due to the thrashing given to Sri Shyamananda Prabhu. Upon hearing this, Sri Hridaya Chaitanya felt very hurt and asked for His forgiveness again and again. Sriman Mahaprabhu directed him to organize a twelve day Danda Mahotsava (Punishment Festival) to atone for the horrible Vaishnava offence committed by him.

The next day Sri Hridaya Chaitanya informed all Vaishnavas about the incident and the punishment given by Sriman Mahaprabhu. When Sri Shyamananda Prabhu came to know about it, he felt very sad and requested the Vaishnavas to allow him to organize the festival instead of his Gurudeva. Appreciating how much devotion and faith Sri Shyamananda Prabhu had in his Gurudeva, the Vaishnavas unanimously allowed him to organize the Danda Mahotsava. With the help of Srila Jiva Goswami and the Vaishnavas of Vraja, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu organized the first Danda Mahotsava in Vrindavan with great pomp as ordered by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. After the festival Sri Hridaya Chaitanya left for Gauda Mandala accompanied by the sixty-four Mahantas, twelve Gopals and the other Vaishnavas, and Sri Shyamananda Prabhu became again absorbed in the service and worship of Sri Shyamsundar.

During those days another unprecedented incident took place. One night Sri Shyamsundar appeared in Sri Shyamananda Prabhu's dream and told him, "My Radharani has appeared in the palace of the King of Bharatpur. Bring Her here and unite Us." Meanwhile, Srimati Radharani had appeared in the treasury of the King of Bharatpur in the form of a small deity of a girl and directed the King in a dream, "Dear King, My Shyamsundar became manifested in the grove of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu in Sri Vrindavan. Arrange My marriage with Him." The very fortunate King came to Vrindavan with his Queen and ministers and on the Vasanta Panchami day of 1580 AD he performed the marriage of Srimati Radharani and Sri Shyamsundar with great pomp. After the marriage the King built the present temple and gave the village Chatikara for the service of the Deity. In those days, the King of Jaipur also donated the village Shyamali. During the life of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu such transcendental pastimes happened one after the other and therefore with the consent of all, Srila Jiva Goswami awarded him the title "Prabhu."

For the propagation of Prema Bhakti, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu inspired Srila Rupa Goswami, Srila Sanatana Goswami, Srila Gopala Bhatta Goswami, Srila Jiva Goswami, etc. to write many books. To preach the message in those books, all the Gaudiya Vaishnava Goswamis living in Vrindavan unanimously decided to send Sri Srinivasa Acharya, Sri Narottama Dasa Thakura and Sri Shyamananda Prabhu to Gauda Mandala carrying copies of the manuscripts with them. On the way, Virahambira, King of Vanavishnupur and descendant of the Malla dynasty, stole all the books. Sri Srinivasa Acharya stayed in Vanavishnupur to search for the stolen books while Sri Narottama Dasa Thakura and Sri Shyamananda Prabhu left for Kheturi. They spent some days in Kheturi absorbed in reflecting on the secret conclusions of the principles of Bhakti. From there Sri Shyamananda Prabhu left for Ambika, where his Gurudeva, Sri Hridaya Chaitanya, also ordered him to preach. Strictly following this order, he went to Sri Nrsinghpur via Dharendra, his birth place. By the direct mercy of Srimati Radharani, being influenced by the

unlimited Prema Bhakti emanating from the heart of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, thousands of residents of Utkal took initiation from him.

Sri Shyamananda Prabhu resided in Sri Vrindavan for fifteen years in Sri Shyamsundar's transcendental kingdom of love, receiving the direct mercy of Srimati Radharani, and on account of this he had a very close connection with Sri Vrindavan. Feeling deep attraction for Sri Vrindavan, he returned there from Utkal bringing with him his family Deity, Sri Shyam Ray, and many dear disciples. Travelling through the forests, he blessed not only the human beings but also tigers, elephants, bears, deers, peacocks and cuckoos and gave them Sri Hari Nama initiation making all of them mad of love for Krishna. One day two big tigers were lying on the path obstructing his way. He advised those ferocious tigers to chant Sri Hari Nama, and to the surprise of all those present the tigers entered the dense forest saluting Sri Shyamananda Prabhu again and again. On his arrival in Vrindavan, Srila Jiva Goswami and all Vaishnavas living there became very glad to have him back after so many years.

One day he was immersed in meditating on the lotus feet of Sri Sri Radha-Shyamsundar in Nibhrita Kunja. Suddenly Sri Shyamsundar manifested Himself in his meditation and said, "O Shyamananda! Nowadays all inhabitants of Utkal (Odisha) are misbehaving and indulging in horrible sinful activities. Go there and give initiation to my dear Rasika Murari and work jointly to deliver all the inhabitants of Utkal." Despite this order, because of his unwillingness to leave Sri Vrindavan, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu did not take any action and also did not disclose this matter to anyone. Sri Shyamsundar then appeared in the dream of Sri Jiva Goswami and said, "O Jiva! I have directed Shyamananda thrice to go to Utkal, but he is not going. You should instigate him to go."

Getting this message from Srila Jiva Goswami, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu finally left for Utkal accompanied by Kishora, Balaka, Shyam Dasa, Thakura Prasada Dasa and other disciples. When they reached Agra they were imprisoned by the local guards, who suspected them of being robbers because they did not have documents of identity. However on that night Lord Krishna, Who is always very affectionate towards His devotees, assumed the form of Narasimhadeva and duly chastised the Mughal officer there. The officer surrendered to Sri Shyamananda Prabhu and became a Vaishnava and great servant of the sadhus and devotees of Lord Krishna.

Sri Shyamananda Prabhu reached Gauda Mandala via Prayaga and Varanasi, and then went to Bagadi to have darshan of Sri Krishna Ray. From Bagadi he went to Bhatbhumu where the local king himself came to meet him and later received initiation from him. One of the previous kings of Bhatbhumu had insulted a great Vaishnava, and being cursed by him, Bhatbhumu was being terrorized by a fierce tiger. By the mercy of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu the effect of the curse subsided and the inhabitants of the kingdom became free from the tiger's menace.

From Bhatbhumu Sri Shyamananda Prabhu reached Dharendra distributing the priceless Sri Hari Nama everywhere. At that place, a Pathan named Sher Khan, who was a Royal Deputy, with the assistance of his subordinates broke the mridangas and other instruments of the sankirtana party. Sri Shyamananda Prabhu became enraged and made a frightening roar, which amazingly produced a terrific blazing fire that started burning the beards and moustaches of the Yavanas. Those tyrants started vomiting blood and, almost dead, fled the place. The next day Sri Shyamananda Prabhu went around the town with several sankirtana parties. Pathan Sher Khan then came before him, fell at his feet and asked for forgiveness. Afflicted with fear, he narrated the incident he had in the previous night, "In a dream I first saw Allah in a very frightening form. Afterwards, He appeared in a very pleasing golden form and

introduced Himself as Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. He suddenly became angry and warned me to take initiation from Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, otherwise I will have to go to hell. Therefore, O my lord, please consider me yours and give me your mercy.” The greatly merciful Sri Shyamananda Prabhu was touched by the Pathan’s humble request and initiated him in the Sri Hari Nama Maha-mantra and gave him the name “Sri Chaitanya Dasa.”

From Dharendra, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu went to Rohini, and from there he visited the royal assembly in Ghantashila, where he met Sri Rasikananda Prabhu. Although Sri Shyamananda Prabhu had never seen Sri Rasikananda Prabhu before, he recognized him at first sight. He gave initiation in the Sri Krishna-mantra to Sri Rasikananda, his little daughter Devaki and his wife Srimati Ichha Devi, whose name was changed to Shyamdasi.

One day Sri Rasikananda Prabhu became absent-minded while listening to a lecture on the Shrimad Bhagavatam in the royal assembly in Ghantashila. Becoming angry at this, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu kicked him twice. Sri Rasikananda Prabhu felt very embarrassed, and prostrating at Sri Shyamananda Prabhu’s lotus feet he repeatedly requested him for forgiveness. Feeling very joyful, he said that by receiving such mercy from Gurudeva in the form of these kicks, his life was blessed and that all his auspicious and inauspicious actions had been destroyed.

Sri Shyamananda Prabhu then went to Nrsinghpur where Sri Narottama Dasa Thakura came to meet him after arriving from Nilachala. When Sri Narottama Dasa Thakura went back, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu went to Chakulia accompanied by Sri Rasikananda Prabhu and stayed at the house of Sri Damodara Pandita, a devoted practitioner of yoga and an old classmate of Sri Rasikananda Prabhu. One day Sri Rasikananda Prabhu requested Sri Damodara Pandita to become a disciple of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, but full of pride he replied that he would do so only if he sees something very special in him and not otherwise.

Every day Yogi Damodara practised yoga at a lonely place in a small forest on the bank of River Kharba in Chakulia. One day he went to that place to perform yoga and was struck with wonder. All of a sudden he saw a divine image of Sri Vrindavan. In that city made of precious stones he saw the youth Sri Shyamsundar, the best of dancers, sitting on a throne made of jewels under a wish-fulfilling tree. He was dressed in yellow, there was a flute on His lips and He was gently smiling. Sri Shyamananda Prabhu in a Manjari form was offering pan to Him. Seeing this, Yogi Damodara understood that Sri Shyamananda Prabhu was not an ordinary man but was directly an eternal beloved of Lord Sri Krishna. However the pride of being a brahmana by caste prevented him from taking refuge at the lotus feet of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu. On another occasion, when Yogi Damodara returned home after his regular practice of yoga he saw Sri Shyamananda Prabhu sitting in padmasana with his eyes closed, deeply immersed in chanting Sri Hari Nama on his beads, steadily meditating on the incomparable form of Sri Sri Radha-Shyamsundar. The room was completely illuminated by the light emanating from his body. Suddenly Yogi Damodara saw an effulgent brahminical thread shining on Sri Shyamananda Prabhu’s body. Seeing this all, Yogi Damodara became perplexed and gradually his pride for his high caste disappeared. He realized that Sri Shyamananda Prabhu was an eternal beloved of Lord Sri Krishna and that bhakti to Sri Krishna was far superior to birth in the brahmana caste. After experiencing this, Yogi Damodara could not check himself. He ran towards Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, placed his lotus feet on his own chest and repeatedly apologized for the offence committed by him out of his negligence and pride. In 1609 AD, he, his mother and his two wives took initiation from Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, gave up the path of yoga and engaged exclusively in pure devotional service.

From Chakulia Sri Shyamananda Prabhu went to Dhalbhumgarh. The King there, Navina Kishora Dhal, was a Shakta and worshipped Mundalia Rankini Devi and he made arrangements for the stay of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, Sri Rasikananda Prabhu and their disciples in the temple of this Devi. At midnight, feeling hungry, the man-eater Rankini Devi came out from her inner chamber and saw Sri Shyamananda

Prabhu and Sri Rasikananda Prabhu. She became frightened and remorseful, and prostrating at their lotus feet, she apologized again and again for all the sins committed by her. After that she assumed a very terrific form and went to the King. Filled with wrath she ordered him to take refuge at the lotus feet of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, otherwise she would kill the King and his family. Being terrified, the King immediately went to the temple accompanied by his queens, but Sri Shyamananda Prabhu refused to see the face of someone so hostile to the Vaishnavas.

Rankini Devi started to worship the lotus feet of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, and the next morning Sri Shyamananda Prabhu and Sri Rasikananda Prabhu left the temple with their disciples. When they stopped at a mango garden 12 miles away to perform their daily rituals, Rankini Devi brought King Navina Kishora Dhal to that place and made him prostrate at the lotus feet of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu. Being touched by the pitiful supplications of Rankini Devi, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu at last forgave the King and gave initiation to him and his family. At the insistent request of the King, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu organized a festival in the mango garden in which many sadhus and the residents of Dhalbhumgarh also participated.

One day, to test Sri Shyamananda Prabhu and Sri Rasikananda Prabhu, King Navina Kishora Dhal sent some stones of the shape and color of potatoes together with other foodstuffs. As soon as he saw those stones, Sri Rasikananda Prabhu understood the real intentions of Navina Kishora Dhal. He used the stones in different vegetables preparations and then offered it all to Lord Sri Krishna's deity, and everything tasted great. Because he cooked (ghanta) the stones (shila) like potatoes, that place became known as Ghantashila, whose corrupted form is Ghatashila, nowadays situated near Tata Nagar, Jharkhand, and testifies to the transcendental pastimes of Sri Rasikananda Prabhu.

After taking initiation from Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, Rankini Devi did not go back to the kingdom of King Navina Kishora Dhal. She went to Sripat Gopiballabhpur with Sri Rasikananda Prabhu and started living in a new temple specially constructed for her in Belavan on the western side of Gopiballabhpur. She used to supply all the leaf plates and cups for the festivals organized in Sri Gopiballabhpur. However, due to the misbehavior of a servant of Sri Sri Radha-Govinda, Rankini Devi became disturbed and discontinued her service for the last hundred years since the time of Mahanta Sri Sarveshvarananda Deva Goswami Prabhupada.

From Ghantashila, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu sent Sri Rasikananda Prabhu to Chakulia, whereas he himself went to Nilachala. After spending some days there, in 1610 AD he again went to Sri Vrindavan, where he met Sri Srinivasacharya. Soon Sri Rasikananda Prabhu also arrived from Utkal to Vraja to have darshan. In the temple of Sri Keshavadeva in Mathura, he met Sri Shyamananda Prabhu. On his order, after having darshan of the twelve forests, gardens and other holy places, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu went back to Utkal. In 1613 AD, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, Sri Srinivasa Acharya and Sri Ramachandra Kaviraja went to Vanavishnupur via Shantipur, Katwa, Ambika and Jajigram. The King there, Virahambir, met Sri Shyamananda Prabhu for the first time and came to the conclusion that he was many times more virtuous than he had heard. From there, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu left for Sri Nrisinghpur.

In 1613 AD Sri Narottama Dasa Thakura organized the installation festival of six deities in Kheturi with great pomp. Many Vaishnavas from Gauda Mandala, Nilachala, Vraja Mandala and other parts of India took part. Sri Shyamananda Prabhu and Sri Rasikananda Prabhu were present with many disciples. After the festival, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu left for Dharendra via Budhani, whereas Sri Rasikananda Prabhu returned to Rohini, where he came to know that his father, Sri Achyutananda Deva, had left this world and his (Rasikananda's) brothers were fighting fiercely over the property and wealth

left by him. Sri Rasikananda Prabhu's brothers and their wives were openly against his Vaishnava way of life and they all started confronting him.

Seeing so many obstacles to practicing the sixty-four limbs of devotional service in Rohini, he felt very sad. Without caring for the incomparable wealth left by his father, Sri Rasikananda Prabhu left Rohini and went to live in Kashipur with his family. He carried only his family Deity with him, Whom he considered his only support. When Sri Shyamananda Prabhu visited Kashipur, at Sri Rasikananda Prabhu's request, he renamed his family Deity "Sri Gopivallabha Ray" and Kashipur as "Gopiballabhpur."

While staying in Sripat Gopiballabhpur, one day Sri Shyamananda Prabhu asked Sri Rasikananda Prabhu to sit in front of him and said to him with affection, "Dear Rasika, please give me one thing in charity." Sri Rasikananda Prabhu shyly replied with folded hands, "My lord, I have already surrendered my body, mind and life at your lotus feet. What else do I have which may be given to you? Nevertheless, just command me and I will carry your order as if it were an injunction of the Vedas."

Hearing this, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu ordered him, "Please distribute the Sri Hari Nama Mahamantra to everyone in Utkal, from the brahmanas up to the chandalas, to men and women, kings and paupers, old persons, brahmacharis, grhasthas, vanaprasthas and sannyasis without any discrimination." Sri Rasikananda Prabhu committed to execute his Gurudeva's order, and Sri Shyamananda Prabhu placed his hand on his head and mercifully imparted complete power unto him. After that Sri Shyamananda Prabhu went to Chakulia and also ordered Sri Damodara Mishra to distribute Sri Hari Nama in every house in Utkal.

In 1616 AD, following Sri Shyamananda Prabhu's order, Sri Rasikananda Prabhu organized the Panchama Dola Festival in Badakola. It was attended by several minor and major kings and by the Mughal Viceroy of Medinipur. Influenced by the splendor of the festival, the Mughal Viceroy requested Sri Shyamananda Prabhu to organize a similar festival in Medinipur. Acceding to his request, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu went to Medinipur with Sri Rasikananda Prabhu and organized a grand festival lasting for twenty-four hours. During the festival the Mughal Viceroy, surcharged with divine love, chanted "Haribol! Haribol!" again and again, and hearing this, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu named him "Haribola." After the festival, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu went to Nadajal with Sri Rasikananda Prabhu and established the service to the Deity of Sri Madana Mohana.

From Nadajal Sri Shyamananda Prabhu went to Tamluk with his disciples and they stayed in a nearby Durga Mandapa. In those days the King of Tamluk was under the influence of a tantric sannyasi. On the suggestion of that tantric, the King declared that the place where the Vaishnavas sat had become impure and he ordered that the clay covering the floor be thrown out and replaced by new clay. The King's attendants then started to remove the clay, but to their astonishment, despite their best efforts, the amount of clay would not diminish. Hearing about this fantastic incident, the King became frightened and came out to take refuge at the lotus feet of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, who flatly refused to see even the face of someone so hostile to the Vaishnavas.

That night Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu told Sri Shyamananda Prabhu in a dream that previously He used to be worshipped in Padumvasan, but because of the wickedness of that mayavadi tantric, His Deity was on a mat, hidden in the house of a brahmana of Mirzapur. Sriman Mahaprabhu directed Sri

Shyamananda Prabhu to bring His Deity from that place and restart His worship and service. Under the orders of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, the next morning Sri Rasikananda Prabhu went to Mirzapur incognito and after having darshan of the faultlessly beautiful Deity of Sriman Mahaprabhu in the house of the brahmana, he went back and informed Sri Shyamananda Prabhu. Sri Shyamananda Prabhu then went to Mirzapur with Sri Rasikananda Prabhu, many disciples and a sankirtana party. The King of Tamluk also followed them with his large army. After satisfying the brahmana of Mirzapur, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu brought back the Deity of Sriman Mahaprabhu to Tamluk. The King constructed a new temple for the Deity and donated many lands and riches for His service. Following the orders of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, Sri Radhavallabha Dasa, a disciple of Sri Rasikananda Prabhu, gave initiation to the King, after which the mayavadi tantric ran away from Tamluk.

After reestablishing the service to the Deity of Sriman Mahaprabhu previously worshipped by Sri Vasudeva Ghosh in Tamluk, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu left for Basantia with Sri Rasikananda Prabhu, where he started the service to Sri Gokula Chandra in 1617 AD. After appointing someone to carry on the service, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu left for his native village, Dharendra, with his disciples. While he was staying in Dharendra, Srila Hridaya Chaitanya Adhikari Thakura arrived there with many disciples. Seeing that Sri Shyamananda Prabhu and his disciples and grand-disciples had immersed the whole of Utkal in Sri Hari Nama and loving devotional service as desired by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Srila Hridaya Chaitanya felt extremely satisfied. During this period, being repeatedly requested by devotees like Sri Rasamaya, Sri Bamsi, Sri Bhima, Sri Srikara, etc. Sri Shyamananda Prabhu married Srimati Shyampriya Dasi, daughter of Sri Jagannatha Dasa, a resident of Badabalarampur.

Following the instruction of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, Sri Rasikananda Prabhu gave initiation to the King of Mayurabhanj, Sri Vaidyanatha Bhanj, and his brothers and received many priceless gifts from him. In those days Sri Shyamananda Prabhu was in Sri Govindapur. Sri Rasikananda Prabhu went, along with Srimati Yamuna Thakurani, a resident of Mayurabhanj, to see him with all the above gifts. Bound by the desire and request of Sri Rasikananda Prabhu, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu accepted Srimati Yamuna Thakurani as his wife. In 1618 AD, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu started the service and worship of Sri Vinoda Ray in Sri Govindapur and organized a huge Rasa Festival. From that day on that place became known as Sri Rasa Govindapur.

Uddanda Bhuniya, a landlord of Balia nearby Sri Nrisinghpur, was very arrogant (uddanda) which befitted his name. Part of the road leading from Gauda Mandala to Nilachala was within his property and he used to kill and plunder the travellers crossing it. In 1619 AD Sri Shyamananda Prabhu went to Balia with Sri Rasikananda Prabhu and many other disciples. Uddanda Bhuniya could not recognize both Prabhus, and assisted by his cruel servants he attacked them. At that time a very strange and surprising thing happened. The arrows shot by the servants of Uddanda Bhuniya started boomeranging and hurting the archers themselves. Becoming frightened by this miracle, Uddanda Bhuniya surrendered at the lotus feet of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu. Never seeing others' faults, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu was so merciful to him that even such an aggressive rascal turned into a great Vaishnava. Before meeting Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, Uddanda Bhuniya used to kill sadhus and Vaishnavas who were passing through the road in his estate. He stored their torn clothes in a room of his palace, 718 in total, as a display of his strength. Sri Shyamananda Prabhu later distributed all of them to the Vaishnavas.

From Balia, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, Sri Rasikananda Prabhu and their disciples went to Remuna to have darshan of Kshirachora Gopinatha, Who was carved by Lord Sri Rama and mother Srimati Sita with Their own hands in Treta-yuga when They were living on Chitrakoot Hill. Subsequently the King of Cuttack brought Him to Remuna and installed Him in a temple especially constructed for Him. Sri Madhavendra Puri, grand-spiritual master of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, once visited this temple

for darshan and Sri Gopinatha hid an earthen pot full of Khira (condensed milk) for him and therefore became known as “Kshirachora Gopinatha.”

Reaching Remuna, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu visited the temple, but Sri Gopinatha was not there. Not being able to have His darshan, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu felt so sad that he stopped taking food and water. At night Lord Krishna, Who is always affectionate toward His devotees, told Sri Shyamananda Prabhu in a dream that at present the villagers were worshipping Him as Chandi Devi in the village market.

The next morning Sri Shyamananda Prabhu went to the market with some villagers and found some people worshipping a stone image as Chandi Devi and smearing it with vermilion. On Sri Shyamananda Prabhu’s order the image was retrieved from the villagers and after washing it and removing the vermilion, the faultlessly beautiful form of Sri Gopinatha, bent in three places, became visible. Sri Shyamananda Prabhu organized a twenty-four hour Sri Hari Nama Yajna festival and reinstalled the Deity in the temple. At this occasion the local Muslim Shah was present and took shelter at Sri Shyamananda Prabhu’s lotus feet.

Sri Shyamananda Prabhu went to have darshan of Sapta Sarovara, Rama Chandi, Vraja Sarovara, Gargeshvara Mahadeva, the birth place of Sri Sridhara Swami (the commentator of the Shrimad Bhagavatam), and then went to Gauradanda, where he loudly called the name “Baladeva” three times. At that time nobody could understand whom he was calling, but on his call, at the end of the 17th century AD, Sri Baladeva Vidyabhushana, the prestigious Gaudiya Vedanta commentator, would take birth at that place.

After restarting the service and worship of Sri Kshirachora Gopinatha in Remuna, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu and Sri Rasikananda Prabhu travelled through Nilagiri, Badagram, Bhadrak, and then had darshan of Sri Sakshi Gopala. It was the time of the Ratha-yatra in Sri Jagannatha Puri and both Prabhus and the devotees quickly walked towards Puri to have darshan of Lord Jagannatha’s Ratha. However night fell before they could arrive, and they had to spend the night at a place about 10 miles away from Puri. The next morning after completing their daily rituals, they started running towards Puri. Meanwhile, with great pomp the chariot of Lord Balarama, named Taladhvaja, and the chariot of Subhadra Maharani, named Devadalana, left towards Gundicha Mandir amidst the sound of conches, kettledrums, mridangas, etc., but the chariot of Lord Jagannatha, named Nandighosha, remained standing in the same place. When the King of Puri saw that thousands of devotees and his powerful elephants could not make the chariot move forward, he became hopeless. Then one of the chief priests received a message from Lord Jagannatha Himself that His two devotees, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu and Sri Rasikananda Prabhu, had reached Atharnala and that the chariot would move forward only when they arrive in Puri. The King immediately left for Atharnala with his ministers and brought them to Puri. At the sound of sankirtana, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu circumambulated the chariot and instructed Sri Rasikananda Prabhu to push it. As soon as Sri Rasikananda Prabhu touched the chariot with his forehead to push it forward, to the astonishment of all those present, it started moving forward speedily, and making a thundering sound it reached Gundicha Mandir without delay.

The amazed King, Gajapati Sri Langula Narasimha Deva, granted Sri Shyamananda Prabhu a permanent residence at a good and secluded place in the flower garden of Lord Jagannatha, where he established the “Kunja Math.” After taking sannyasa, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu came to Nilachala and resided in this same place for some days and subsequently moved to Gambhira.

From Nilachala, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, Sri Rasikananda Prabhu and their disciples went to Rajaghat via Rasagovindapur and Remuna. One day a mayavadi sannyasi teased him by calling him a “hypocrite Vaishnava,” but Sri Shyamananda Prabhu did not retort. They went to the bank of the Suvarnarekha River, where they saw a big crocodile lying with its mouth open. Sri Shyamananda Prabhu

said, “O crocodile! Due to some sinful activities in your previous birth you have become a crocodile. Now you should give up violence. Lord Sri Krishna shall surely be merciful unto you.” Surprising all those present, the crocodile came forward towards Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, who then initiated him in the Sri Hari Nama Maha-mantra. After that the crocodile bowed down to Sri Shyamananda Prabhu and slowly entered the deep waters of the river. Seeing this with his own eyes, the sannyasi started burning with remorse for having offended Sri Shyamananda Prabhu and fell at his lotus feet begging for forgiveness. Sri Shyamananda Prabhu was merciful unto him and named him as “Shankara Dasa.”

From Rajghat, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu left for Bhograia via Bedapal. In Bhograia there lived four tantric sannyasis who performed tamasik worship offering animal sacrifices to Vasuli Devi. One day the four sannyasis teased the Vaishnavas following Sri Shyamananda Prabhu very much. Hurt by that, they informed Sri Shyamananda Prabhu and he advised them to start sankirtana very loudly, which would automatically ruin those rascals.

On that same night Vasuli Devi came to the residence of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu in a celestial form and started serving his lotus feet. He said to her in anger, “You kill living beings, drink their blood and eat their flesh, therefore you should not touch my feet.” Vasuli Devi repeatedly asked forgiveness for all her sins. Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, who is an ocean of mercy, pardoned her and asked his disciple Sri Anandananda to initiate her into Sri Hari Nama. After that Vasuli Devi went to the dwelling place of those four wicked tantrics and in a great rage punished them very severely. They fled away and took shelter at the lotus feet of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu to save their lives. Sri Shyamananda Prabhu became compassionate and assured them that they had nothing to fear. He gave them many instructions and they became great Vaishnavas. On his order, Sri Anandananda gave them initiation.

While he was residing in the house of Sri Rasamaya in Dharendra, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu once instructed Sri Rasikananda Prabhu to organize such a Rasa Festival in Sri Gopiballabhpur that the inhabitants of the whole universe would become astonished. Abiding by the order of his Gurudeva, in 1621 AD Sri Rasikananda Prabhu organized a transcendental Rasa Festival. It was attended by innumerable Vaishnavas from Sri Vrindavan, Navadvip, Puri, Ayodhya, Dvarka and many other parts of India. It was so splendid and successful that all the participants returned to their homes fully satisfied exclaiming, “All glories to Sri Rasikananda Prabhu!” The water from the feet (charanamrita) of one hundred thousand Vaishnavas was collected at that time and is still available in Sri Gopiballabhpur and at the Sri Sri Radha-Shyamsundar Temple in Sri Vrindavan.

While Sri Shyamananda Prabhu was in Sri Gopiballabhpur he received the information that a Mughal officer, Ahmadi Beg, was oppressing the residents of Sri Radha Nagar. The officer was forcibly usurping the lands and wealth gifted to Sri Shyamananda Prabhu and Sri Rasikananda Prabhu by several kings and landlords of Odisha for the service of Sri Sri Radha Krishna, the sadhus and Vaishnavas, etc. Shri Shyamananda Prabhu instructed Sri Rasikananda Prabhu to get back all the properties. Abiding by his Gurudeva’s order, in 1623 AD Sri Rasikananda Prabhu arrived in Vanapur at the palace of the King of Mayurabhanj, Sri Vaidyanatha, accompanied by Vamshi Dasa and other disciples.

In those days a huge wild elephant was devastating Vanapur. The inhabitants, including Ahmadi Beg, were terrified that they would be killed. Irritated by Sri Shyamananda Prabhu’s bright face, attractive personality, manners befitting a great Vaishnava, uncommon pastimes and popularity, Ahmadi Beg made a plot to humiliate him. In the presence of several kings and landlords he stated that if Sri Rasikananda Prabhu could overpower that violent elephant, he (Ahmadi Beg) would accept him as Narayana and return

all the usurped land and wealth. When Sri Rasikananda Prabhu received this information he went to meet Ahmadi Beg, and by chance took the same road through which that wild elephant was travelling. Seeing the elephant, those following Sri Rasikananda Prabhu fled to a secure place to save their lives leaving him alone there, but he was not at all scared and kept chanting Sri Hari Nama on his beads. Trumpeting in a frightening way, the elephant ran towards Sri Rasikananda Prabhu at full speed but upon reaching him stood silently with its trunk raised. Sri Rasikananda Prabhu gave many instructions to the elephant, who listened very attentively and started shedding tears, bowing down again and again. Sri Rasikananda Prabhu initiated him by murmuring the Sri Hari Nama Maha-mantra in his ear and named him “Gopala Dasa.” Subsequently, wearing Tulasi beads around its neck, the elephant Gopala Dasa became a great servant of sadhus and Vaishnavas.

Ahmadi Beg saw the miracle with his own eyes from the top of his palace. Realizing the greatness of Sri Rasikananda Prabhu, he became very afraid on account of his sinful deeds and took shelter at his lotus feet. He returned all the usurped land and wealth and donated several new villages for the service of sadhus and Vaishnavas. On the order of Sri Rasikananda Prabhu, he also donated several bars of gold for the Navakalevara Festival of Lord Jagannatha in Puri.

In his previous life the elephant Gopala Dasa was a resident of Vanapur named Harihara. Once when He was coming from Ramakeli to Nilachala, Lord Chaitanya spent a night at his house. The Lord noticed that Harihara would engage a pure brahmana to daily offer five kilos of uncooked rice to Sri Shaligrama. Angry at this offense, Sriman Mahaprabhu cursed Harihara and his family to be born as elephants. In the next life, Harihara took birth as an elephant and was engaged in large scale destruction in Vanapur until he was delivered by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in the form of Sri Rasikananda.

While returning from Vanapur, Sri Rasikananda Prabhu spent a night in Sri Jagannatha Puri. Lord Jagannatha appeared in his dream and directed him to install a deity of Govinda in Sri Gopiballabhpur. In the morning, the brothers Raghunatha Kamilya and Ananda Kamilya, two good sculptors of Nilachala, met Sri Rasikananda Prabhu after receiving separate instructions from Lord Jagannatha in their dreams. Sri Rasikananda Prabhu brought them to meet Sri Shyamananda Prabhu in Thuriya. Sri Shyamananda Prabhu had both sculptors carve the extremely beautiful deity of Sri Vrindavan Chandra. In 1625 AD, Sri Rasikananda Prabhu took both sculptors to Sri Gopiballabhpur and under the direction of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu carved a celestial and enchanting deity of Sri Govinda. He married Sri Govinda to a deity of Srimati Radharani self-manifested in the palace of the King of Mayurabhanj, and became immersed in the worship and service of the divine couple.

From Thuriya, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu and Sri Rasikananda Prabhu went to Ghantashila where they received the village Satuti as a donation from the local king for the service of sadhus and Vaishnavas. Sri Shyamananda Prabhu renamed the village Sri Shyamsundarpur. After staying there for some days he went to a village named Ayodhya, where he constructed a house and lived there for some time. From Ayodhya he went to live in Sana Govindapur, and his three wives – Srimati Gauranga Dasi, Srimati Shyampriya Dasi and Srimati Yamuna Dasi – joined him.

Sri Shyamananda Prabhu toured the whole of Utkal with Sri Rasikananda Prabhu to propagate Sri Hari Nama and love of God as desired by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. One day, in order to reveal the greatness of Sri Rasikananda Prabhu, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu conferred upon him the title “Thakura Goswami” or “Deva Goswami.” After that, by the order of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, everyone addressed him as “Deva Goswami.”

After some time, with the help of Sri Rasikananda Prabhu, Sri Damodara and others, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu organized the Dola Festival in Thuriya. Immediately after the festival he was ordered by Lord Sri Krishna to go to Vraja. He entrusted Sri Rasikananda Prabhu with responsibility for the Shyamanandi congregation and was ready to depart for Vraja, but because of Sri Rasikananda Prabhu's and the other devotees' continuous and pitiful requests, he was compelled to change his decision. Subsequently, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu suffered from rheumatism and Sri Rasikananda Prabhu brought a medicinal oil named "Himasagara" from a renowned Ayurvedic physician, Sri Harichandana. By massaging his head with that oil, he gradually recovered his health.

After recovering, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu left Thuriya and went to Sri Gopiballabhpur via Dharendra in the company of Sri Rasikananda Prabhu and other disciples. During his stay there, Mahanta Suryananda, head of the Ramanandi sampradaya in Galta, Rajasthan, visited Sri Gopiballabhpur with 14,000 Naga Sadhus. Seeing the first class worship offered to Sri Govinda and the regular service to thousands of sadhus, Sri Suryananda was touched and developed a desire to take birth as the son of Sri Rasikananda Prabhu. However, following the directions of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, he took birth as Nayananda, the eldest son of Sri Radhananda, who was the eldest son of Sri Rasikananda Prabhu. Sri Suryananda had a scar on his back caused by the stroke of a spade during a fight in the Kumbha Mela in Haridwar. Surprisingly, when he took birth as Nayananda, that same mark appeared on his back.

After the departure of Mahanta Suryananda from Sri Gopiballabhpur, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu went to Keshiyadi via Rohini. On his arrival a huge festival started, in which countless people from villages and hilly areas came daily to have his Darshan. One night Sarvamangala Devi came to see Sri Shyamananda Prabhu and started praising his glories in many ways, but Sri Shyamananda Prabhu scolded her for committing violence to sustain herself, and hence she should not even touch him. She became very dejected, and holding his feet she begged forgiveness again and again. Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, who was an ocean of mercy, then gave her initiation into Sri Hari Nama. Sarvamangala Devi promised to never commit violence again and thus she became a great Vaishnavi.

Seeing the daily festivals at Keshiyadi and the large sankirtana parties due to the presence of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, the Mughal ruler of the area became jealous of him. He thought that Sri Shyamananda Prabhu was just the guru of some rascal villagers and aborigines, and that if he could imprison him they would be automatically suppressed. On this pretext, he sent Sri Shyamananda Prabhu to jail. Even in jail Sri Shyamananda Prabhu remained immersed in unalloyed loving devotion as usual, but Lord Sri Krishna, Who is always affectionate towards His devotees, cannot tolerate the slightest insult to His devotee. Within three days the wife, son and other relatives of the Mughal ruler died. That wicked Mughal lost his wealth, properties, horses and elephants, and faced unending bodily difficulties. Only after all this happened did he become conscious of his serious offence against a Vaishnava. Full of remorse, he surrendered at the lotus feet of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu who showered his mercy and made him a great Vaishnava.

From Keshiyadi Sri Shyamananda Prabhu went to Panchati, where the local landlord, Sri Harinarayana, and all his family members took initiation from him. He then went to Patashpur, where the landlord named Sri Nrisimha Gajapati also took initiation from him. From Patashpur he went to Khanakul via Narayanagarh, where he stayed at the house of Sri Abhirama Gopala. Sri Shyamananda Prabhu himself narrated the divine pastimes of Sri Abhirama Gopala— how he stayed in a cave in Dvapara Yuga, how in Kaliyuga he was taken out by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and brought to Khanakul, and how the service and worship of Sri Gopinatha was established by him (Sri Abhirama Gopala) at that place. Surcharged with emotions, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu narrated all these incidents as they happened.

One day, with great faith and devotion, a Kayastha leader of Khanakul took Sri Shyamananda Prabhu and his devotees to his residence. At that time a great fire ceremony was being conducted at his home. The chief priest sent his assistant outside to bring fire to light the sacrificial pyre. Sri Bhuvana

Mangala, a disciple of Sri Rasikananda Prabhu who was also present, told the chief priest that only spiritual fire (Brahmagni) was desirable in a sacrifice. Saying this, Sri Bhuvana Mangala blew air from his mouth on the sacrificial pyre and it immediately caught on fire. Seeing his uncommon power, all those present started to show great reverence for him.

From Khanakul Sri Shyamananda Prabhu and Sri Rasikananda Prabhu went to Chandana Nagar via Chunchuda. Here they installed the deities of Sri Sri Radha Govinda on the bank of the River Ganges in 1628 AD and established Their service and worship, accompanied by a twenty-four hour Sri Hari Nama mahayajna and a huge festival. From Chandana Nagar he went to Miragoda and then Basantiya, where he had previously started the worship and service of Sri Gokula Chandra Ji. At night, Sri Gokula Chandra told him in a dream that every morning He and the gopas take the cows for grazing and come back at the sunset, and that He is so distressed with hunger that He is unable to sleep at night. He further said that it is absolutely true that He is suffering from hunger. After the dream, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu woke up and called the head of the temple and made suitable arrangements to prepare offerings of foodstuffs to Sri Gokula Chandra eight times a day.

From Basantiya, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu went to Sri Shyamsundarpur via Hijali and Mayurabhanj. Meanwhile, in 1629 AD, Srila Hridaya Chaitanya Thakura disappeared from this world in Ambika. Hearing about the sad disappearance of his Gurudeva, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu felt as if struck by a thunderbolt and wept bitterly. After organizing a festival in his memory, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu left for Sri Govindapur where he received the bad news about the disappearance of his dear disciple Sri Damodara. Feeling very sad, he told Sri Rasikananda Prabhu that Sri Damodara had shown him the way to leave this world. In Sri Govindapur he organized the first festival in the memory of Sri Damodara and the second festival in the memory of Srila Hridaya Chaitanya Adhikari Thakura. In the presence of the devotees who had come to participate in the festival, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu said to Sri Rasikananda Prabhu, “Dear Rasika, according to Lord Sri Krishna’s wish and directions, all inhabitants of Utkala have become mad out of love for Him. Please stay with the people here for some time more. I received orders from Lord Sri Krishna to leave this world, therefore I shall not stay here much longer.” After making this statement, he went to Sri Nrisinghpur with Sri Rasikananda Prabhu and other devotees, where all of a sudden he became ill and felt acute pain. Many renowned Ayurvedic physicians and Sri Rasikananda Prabhu remained in his service and looked after him day and night, but despite the best treatment four months passed with no improvement in his health.

One day, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu called all the devotees present there and said to them, “Please do not make more efforts for my recovery, as I have received a call from Lord Sri Krishna to leave this world. I shall now take your leave. Just perform Sri Hari Nama kirtana day and night. Dear saintly devotees, you should just sing the glories of Sri Krishna. At this juncture, this is the only medicine for me.” He called Sri Rasikananda Prabhu near to him, placed his feet on his (Sri Rasikananda Prabhu’s) head and imparted his full power to him. In the presence of all the devotees of the Shyamanandi congregation, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu tied a turban on Sri Rasikananda Prabhu’s head, applied a tilak on his forehead with his own hands and declared him as the Mahanta of entire Shyamanandi community and added that all should follow his directions and instructions. The descendants of Sri Rasikananda Prabhu, the Goswami Prabhupadas, carry on the unbroken stream of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu’s mercy by guiding the whole Shyamanandi community and the Vaishnava society at large.

On the fifth day of the bright fortnight of the month of Jyestha of 1623 AD, the twelve day ‘Danda Mahotsava’ was started by the devotees in Sri Govindapur according to the tradition. Meanwhile, Sri Rasikananda Prabhu was busy serving Sri Shyamananda Prabhu who was bedridden in Sri Nrisinghpur. On the full moon day Sri Shyamananda Prabhu felt increasing pain and because of this all the devotees became very anxious. Sri Hari Nama sankirtana was sounding loudly in the land and sky of

Sri Nrsinghpur. At that time, on the first lunar day after the Jyestha Sankranti Purnima, amidst lakhs of wailing Vaishnavas, Sri Shyamananda Prabhu concluded his manifested pastimes thus making everyone feel helpless. Sri Rasikananda Prabhu wept bitterly and fell unconscious several times. The news of the disappearance of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu spread all over Utkal like fire. Kings, rulers, rich, poor, men, women – lakhs of Vaishnavas assembled in Sri Nrsinghpur to mourn his disappearance. The pitiful wailing of the Vaishnavas became heart rending. It was unanimously decided that two samadhis of Sri Shyamananda Prabhu should be established: one in Sri Nrsinghpur (presently called Kanpur) and the other in Sri Vrindavan near the Sri Sri Radha-shyamsundar Temple, on the same spot as he had found Srimati Radharani's anklet and received the Deity of Sri Shyamsundar from Her.

O Kanaka Manjari, Shyamananda Prabhu! We bid farewell to you. While absorbed in the eternal worship and service of Sri Sri Radha-shyamsundar in the groves Sri Goloka Vrindavan, please keep showering the nectar of your merciful glance on the people afflicted by the heat of Kali-yuga. May your merciful glance help them at every step in their blissful journey.

APPENDIX

Sri Shyamananda Prabhu was not merely a great religious preacher, great Vaishnava, renowned singer, expert flute player and a famous poet, but an eternal beloved (Manjari) of Lord Krishna, an avatar of Mahavishnu and an incarnation invested with the loving emotions of Sri Advaitacharya. The “Ranihati” or “Reneti Sur” style of kirtana is his own creation. Different songs sung in every house in Bengal and Odisha even today were written and pioneered by him. Many songs were written by Sri Shyamananda Prabhu in Bengali and Oriya and they were published in a different booklet.

The flute used by Sri Shyamananda Prabhu, his beads made of palm leaves with verses of “Gita-Govinda” written on them, a Govardhana rock, a manuscript of the Srimad Bhagavata Purana, and some torn clothes used by him are still preserved in the principal center of the Shyamanandi community at Sri Gopiballabhpur.

Sri Shyamananda Prabhu had innumerable disciples, among whom thirteen are considered the principal ones, including Srimati Shyamdasī, wife of Sri Rasikananda Prabhu. Since she was a woman, reference to only twelve branches of Sri Shyamananda's parampara is found.

Sri Shyamananda Prabhu and Sri Rasikananda Prabhu together established 3,500 temples and Mathas all over India. They flooded the people of this world, who are burning in the heat of Kali-yuga, with the Holy Name of Lord Sri Krishna and His loving service. The Shyamanandi community keeps on influencing Vaishnavas all over the world. One of the prominent Dwar Peeths among the fifty two of the four Vaishnava Sampradayas, and the main one among the only two Dwar Peeths of the Madhva Gaudeshvara Sampradaya is “Jagadguru Sri Shyamananda Prabhu's Dwar Peeth” known as the Sri Sri Radha-Shyamsundar Temple in Vrindavan.

The Disciplic Succession of the Sri Shyamanandi-parivara



